

WE CLAIM:

1 1. A method of controlling communication to multiple end users at geographically different
2 locations, the method comprising:
3 -in a broadcasting mode broadcasting content information for receipt by the end users;
4 -in a conferencing mode:
5 -enabling interconnecting at least one subset of the end users through a network;
6 -enabling interaction between the end users of the subset via the network; and
7 -enabling switching between the broadcasting mode and the conference mode.

1 2. The method of claim 1, comprising, while in the conference mode, broadcasting the interaction
2 to another subset of the end-users.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the switching is enabled by a specific event in the content
2 information broadcasted.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the content information comprises video information, and
2 wherein the method comprises:
3 -creating a graphics representation of the video information;
4 -in the conference mode supplying the graphics representation to the subset of end users.

1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein:

2 -one or more specific ones of the end users in the subset is enabled to interactively modify the graphics
3 representation.

1 6. The method of claim 4, wherein:

2 -while in the conferencing mode, the interaction is broadcasted to another subset of end users; and
3 -one or more specific ones of the end users in the subset is enabled to interactively modify the graphics
4 representation.

1 7 A system for controlling communication between multiple end users at geographically different
2 locations, the system comprising:
3 -a server;
4 -a respective one of multiple clients for a respective one of the end users, the clients being coupled to
5 the server;
6 wherein:
7 -the server comprises:
8 -a transmission unit for broadcasting content information to the users;
9 -a trigger unit for triggering formation of at least one group of end users upon an event relating
10 to the broadcasting;
11 -a unit for controlling the formation of the group coupled to the trigger unit; and
12 -each respective client being enabled to switch between making accessible to the respective end user the
13 broadcasted content information and enabling entering a conference between the end users of the group
14 via the client.

1 8. The system of claim 7, wherein:

2 -the server comprises:

3 -a server input for receiving video data; and

4 -a model generator connected to the server input for generating a graphics model based on the

5 video data;

6 -a server output connected to the model generator for supply of the model;

7 -a respective client comprises:

8 -a client input connected to the server output for receipt of the model.

1 9. A client apparatus for use with a video server, the client apparatus comprising:

2 -a receiver for receiving a TV broadcast;

3 -¹ a coder for coding information received via the Internet from another client; and

4 -an input for receipt of a control signal from the server;

5 wherein:

6 -the apparatus is operative to selectively control switching the apparatus between making accessible to

7 an end user the broadcast or making accessible to the end user a real-time communication channel with

8 another client in response to receipt of the control signal.

1 10. The apparatus of claim 10, being operative to render a 3D graphics model received from the

2 server and to make the rendered model accessible to the end user while the end user has access to the

3 communication channel.